

**ARIZONA GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT  
HABITAT PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE  
HABITAT ENHANCEMENT AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT PROPOSAL**

Game Branch / HPC Project Number: 15-603

**PROJECT INFORMATION**

**Project Title:** Hardscrabble Mesa Grassland Maintenance

**Region and Game Management Unit:** Region 6 GMU 22

**Local Habitat Partnership Committee (LHPC):**

- Payson Natural Resources Committee

**Was the project presented to the LHPC?**

**YES**☒ **NO**☐

**Has this project been submitted in previous years?** **YES**☐ **NO**☒

**If Yes, was it funded?** **YES**☐ **NO**☐ → **Funded HPC Project #(s):**

**Project Type:** Juniper Treatment

**Brief Project Summary:** Approximately 100 acres of invasive juniper trees will be pushed with a bull dozier. Due to the cooperation of the permittee and the use of their heavy equipment we are able to keep the cost at \$100.00 per acre. This project will restore historic grasslands in prime elk and deer habitat. This project will also dovetail nicely with several water tank repair and new construction projects that are also being proposed on Hardscrabble Mesa this year.

**Big Game Wildlife Species to Benefit (% benefit per species) :** 50% Elk, 25% Whitetail, 25% Mule Deer

**Implementation Schedule** (Month/Day/Year):

Project Start Date:

March 2, 2016

Depending upon moisture and fire severity

Project End Date:

September 23, 2017

**Environmental Compliance:**

NEPA Completed: **Yes**☒ **No**☐ **N/A**☐

Projected Completion Date: \_\_\_\_\_

State Historic Preservation Office - Archaeological Clearance:  
(Provide Attachment)

**Yes**☒ **No**☐ **N/A**☐

Projected Completion Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Arizona Game and Fish Department EA Checklist: **N/A**☐

To be Completed by: Dave Daniels

Projected Completion Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**PROJECT FUNDING**

**Special Big Game License Tag Funds Requested:**

**\$10,000**

**Cost Share or Matching Funds:**

**\$6,500**

**Total Project Costs:**

**\$16,500**

**PARTICIPANT INFORMATION**

**Applicant** (please print):

Dave Daniels

**Address:**

7200 E University  
Mesa AZ 85207

**E-mail:**

ddaniels@azgfd.gov

**Telephone:** 480-528-8774

**Date:** 8/21/15

**AGFD Contact and Phone No.** (If applicant is not AGFD personnel):

**Project has been coordinated with:**

AZGFD, Tonto National Forest, Hardscrabble Allotment Permittee

**NEED STATEMENT – PROBLEM ANALYSIS:**

Hardscrabble Mesa is in the middle of the most densely populated elk area in unit 22. During fall surveys the AGFD routinely counts between 300-400 elk on the mesa alone. The Hardscrabble Mesa Allotment has recently been acquired by a new permittee who has been working hard to recover the habitat and water resources that had been neglected for several years. This project along with two extensive water projects being proposed will go a long way towards providing adequate forage and water for elk, deer and many other game and non-game species for years to come.

**PROJECT OBJECTIVES:**

The objective if this project is to remove invasive juniper trees on approximately 100 acres of historic grasslands.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND STRATEGIES:**

The permittee will use their own heavy equipment and dozer operators to complete the project. The project boundaries have already been marked and approved by the US Forest Service.

**PROJECT LOCATION**

34 35.928, 111 52.616 – Southwest corner

34 36.073, 111 52.655 – Northwest corner

34 35.585, 111 51.718 - Southeast corner

34 35.826, 111 51.623 - Northeast corner

See attached map

**LAND OWNERSHIP AT THE PROJECT SITE(S):**

(If the project area is private property, please state specifically and provide the landowner's name)

- The land is managed by the USFS, Tonto National Forest, Payson Ranger District

*IF PRIVATE PROPERTY, IS THERE A COOPERATIVE BIG GAME STEWARDSHIP or  
LANDOWNER AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE LANDOWNER AND THE DEPARTMENT?*

YES[] NO[] N/A[X]

**HABITAT DESCRIPTION:**

Hardscrabble Mesa located at approximately 5,600 feet. The vegetative community consists primarily of pinyon juniper woodland.

**ITEMIZED USE OF FUNDS:**

Special Big Game License Tag Funds

\$10,000 – To be used to pay for fuel and a part time dozer operator when the permittee cannot act as operator.

Cost Share or Matching Funds (for volunteer labor rates please refer to the worksheet below)

Hardscrabble Permittee - \$4,000

USFS – 1,500

AGFD- 1,000

**LIST COOPERATORS AND DESCRIBE POTENTIAL PARTICIPATION:**

Hardscrabble Allotment Permittee

- Provide heavy equipment and transportation to site
- Facilitate fuel purchases and delivery
- Provide project labor

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- Provided in-kind contributions in the form of labor for contract administration, project origination, and project coordination/completion.

U.S. Forest Service, Tonto National Forest, Pleasant Valley Ranger District

- Provided administrative support in the form of necessary NEPA and archaeological clearances.
- Provide letter of approval for implementation of project.

**WOULD IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS PROJECT ASSIST IN PROVIDING, MAINTAINING, OR FACILITATING RECREATIONAL ACCESS?**

YES[] NO[X] N/A[]

**PROJECT MONITORING PLAN:**

The project proponent along with the Payson Ranger District will monitor the project

**PROJECT MAINTENANCE:**

The permittee will provide project maintenance.

**PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT TO BE FILED BY:**

The project proponent will complete the completion report

**WATER DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS (please use the worksheet below):**

**TREE CLEARING/REMOVAL PROJECTS** (please use the worksheet below):

## **TREE CLEARING/REMOVAL WORKSHEET**

**PROJECT TITLE:** Hardscrabble Mesa Grassland Maintenance

- 1) **What is the estimated acreage of the project?**  
100
- 2) **How are the trees going to be cleared? (agra axe, chain saw, grubbing, push, chaining):**  
Dozer, pushed
- 3) **What is the estimated number of trees per acre?**  
60-80
- 4) **Describe trees to be cleared (species, estimated diameter, single stem, multi-stem):**  
Alligator juniper, <8 inches dbh, multi-stem
- 5) **Describe terrain (slope, soil type, rocks)**  
Flat or gentle slope with a few rocks although there are areas with more rocks
- 6) **Please list any special land management status for the project site (e.g. Wilderness, National Park, National Monument). If private land, list landowner.**  
None
- 7) **Please provide the following information about access to the proposed site:**  
Type of access (mark one): ☐2x4 vehicles ☒4x4 only ☐Foot only\*\*  
  
\*\*If foot access only: Distance in miles:    Approx. hiking time:  
  
Does access to this site require crossing private or tribal lands? YES ☐ NO ☒  
  
Is the site relatively accessible for tree removal equipment? YES ☐ NO ☒  
  
Please describe any restrictions to public access:  
None

